

Senate Resolution 317

By: Senator Tate of the 38th

A RESOLUTION

1 Expressing regret at the passing of Dr. Otis Smith; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, in 1941, Otis Smith, a young African American medical student, informed Dr.
3 Benjamin Mays, then president of Morehouse College, that in spite of his best efforts he had
4 to end his studies for lack of funds, and Dr. Mays told him to go back to school, that
5 everything was taken care of; and

6 WHEREAS, 35 years later, Dr. Otis Smith, the first African American to be certified as a
7 pediatrician in this state, past president of the Atlanta chapter of the N.A.A.C.P., and leader
8 in his community, discovered that he had been the beneficiary of a scholarship fund
9 established anonymously by Margaret Mitchell; and

10 WHEREAS, Dr. Smith has passed his gift with considerable interest in many ways, among
11 them by funding Morehouse scholarships to assist deserving young medical students, many
12 of whom, like Dr. Smith himself, never knew their benefactor; and by leading the fight to
13 desegregate Atlanta hospitals; and

14 WHEREAS, according to his wife, Gwendolyn, Dr. Smith preached the theme of giving back
15 to the community, and every chance he got he told young people to get themselves prepared
16 and then go back to their communities and help bring someone forward; and

17 WHEREAS, Dr. Smith passed away on February 5, 2007, and the State of Georgia is a better
18 place for his life, and he will be greatly missed by many; and

19 WHEREAS, it is only right and proper that the life and transcendent contributions of this
20 great man be recognized and commended.

1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
2 express regret at the passing of Dr. Otis Smith and extend condolences to his wife,
3 Gwendolyn, and his son, Ralph Hugh Smith.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
5 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Mrs. Gwendolyn Smith.